

RESOURCES ON COLLECTING FOSSILS IN ALABAMA

Revised March 2010

1. The Geological Survey of Alabama (GSA) has published several reports that include information about fossils in the state. These publications are available through the GSA's Publications Sales Office (only open in the mornings). For ordering information, go to www.ogb.state.al.us/publications.aspx, or contact the Publications Sales Office via telephone at (205) 247-3636.

Curious Creatures in Alabama Rocks, Circular 19 (\$3.50 + S&H), includes information about collecting sites. This report is old, but some of the sites should be still accessible.

A Guidebook to the Mississippian Rocks and Fossils of North Alabama, Educational Series 13 (\$6 + S&H), was written to accompany a 1-day field and laboratory workshop for teachers. It is based partially on a 1993 technical publication of the Alabama Geological Society. This report includes directions to and information about collecting sites.

Geology of Alabama, Special Report 14 (\$10.25 + S&H), is a technical report first published in 1926 and recently reprinted. This report requires some geological knowledge, but it is comprehensive if a bit dated.

Monograph 13, *Stratigraphic Distribution of Paleocene and Eocene Fossils in the Eastern Gulf Coast Region* (\$10.25 + S&H), has many good illustrations of mollusks. This report is fairly technical and, because few copies remain, would be best viewed at the GSA library.

Bulletin 121, *Genevievian and Chesterian Crinoids of Alabama* (\$6 + S&H), includes many good photographs of crinoids found in north Alabama.

Bulletin 158, *Ichnology of the Upper Mississippian Hartselle Sandstone of Alabama, with Notes on Other Carboniferous Formations* (\$5.50 + S&H), is a technical report on trace fossils that contains very good photographs.

2. The GSA has several posters under its Educational Series (ES) of publications that may be especially helpful to educators. These include *Fossil Creatures of Alabama* (ES 12), with photos of 29 different fossils found in Alabama; *Mosasaurs of Alabama* (ES 15) depicting a mosasaur, found in Alabama, chasing a sea turtle; and *Alabama's Geologic History* (ES 16), which contains information about ancient life in Alabama. Also available free to visitors are a fact sheet about the State Fossil—the Eocene whale (*Basilosaurus cetoides*), a postcard version of the ES 15 poster, and labeled fossils. These items are available free if picked up from the Publications Sales office or at nominal cost for postage and handling if mailed. For ordering information, go to www.ogb.state.al.us/publications.aspx or contact the Publications Sales Office via telephone at (205) 247-3636.

3. The Alabama Geological Society has published more than 30 field-trip guidebooks summarizing their annual field trips. The Society's web site is <http://homepage.mac.com/jpashin/AGS.htm>. Some of these guidebooks include information about fossils.

4. The Birmingham Paleontological Society (BPS) and Alabama Paleontological Society (APS) conduct fossil-collecting field trips in Alabama at least once a month. Contact information for the BPS is available at www.bps-al.org, and for the APS at www.alabamapaleo.org or from Ashley Allen at ichnofossil@yahoo.com.

5. The Alabama Museum of Natural History has published a report on fossil footprints in Alabama. Contact the Museum (on the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa;

www.amnh.ua.edu) for information about this report. Also, the Museum sometimes leads fossil-related field trips for the public. The Museum's exhibits include displays about fossils.

6. In October 2000, the Alabama Geological Society published *Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks*, by Jim Lacefield. This book covers the geologic history of the state and is profusely illustrated in color. *Lost Worlds* is very well written at the semitechnical level and is currently being revised. The first edition is still available from the author: lacefiel@hiwaay.net.

7. In 2005, the Alabama Paleontological Society published *Pennsylvanian Footprints in the Black Warrior Basin of Alabama*, edited by Ronald J. Buta, Andrew K. Rindsberg, and David C. Kopaska-Merkel. The book is \$49 plus \$4 shipping and handling to destinations in the USA. For ordering information, see www.alabamapaleo.org.

In 1999, a science teacher scouted a surface coal mine in north-central Alabama for his class and found a treasure trove of vertebrate trackways that had been imprinted on a tidal mud flat 310 million years before. The Union Chapel Mine is now recognized as the world's best Carboniferous tracksite. This volume—an unusual collaboration between amateurs and professionals—tells not only about the footprints and associated fossils, but also about the unprecedented effort to rescue the site from reclamation.

Highlights of the book:

- Descriptions of trace fossils and fossil plants
- Photographic atlases of hundreds of specimens
- Earliest evidence of group behavior in fish and amphibians
- Global context and significance of the site
- Written for the educated layperson

8. *Discovering Alabama* has produced a video about the Union Chapel Mine site, called "Tracks Through Time." This is now available in DVD format from *Discovering Alabama* (www.discoveringalabama.com).

9. Encyclopedia of Alabama, geologic entries:

<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Categories.jsp?path=GeographyandEnvironment/>
[/](#)

Entries on fossils:

<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1152>
<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1371>
<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Article.jsp?id=h-2319>
<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1386>
<http://eoa.duc.auburn.edu/face/Article.jsp?id=h-2320>

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